

DALLAS COUNTY

Honorable R.E. Armstrong, III

Dallas County Courthouse
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Susan Parrish
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Vista Volunteer: Cliff Chestnut

Council Priorities

- 1. Need better coordination of services through a Family Service Center, which involves existing local agencies in leadership.**
- 2. Need to reduce violent juvenile crime through a combination of accountability and preventive measures.**
- 3. This will include the establishment of a detention center and preventive programs.**

Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county

Early Care Education

Children (0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

Identify children in need of Early Intervention, Children's Rehabilitation Services, Head Start and LEA programs by increasing awareness and referrals from the local community and professional service providers

Action Steps

- 1) Utilize Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, Early Intervention Services, Children's Rehabilitation Service, Head Start and LEA Program.
- 2) Parental Involvement.
- 3) Public awareness with medical community, parents, legislators, agencies, school systems, organizations, etc.
- 4) Educate and collaborate with local health care providers and physicians to make referrals and to understand the importance of Early Intervention, Children's Rehabilitation services, Head Start and LEA programs.

Increase number of health care providers for children in Dallas County

Action Steps

- 1) Recruit health care providers for Dallas County i.e. pediatric OT's, PT's, speech pathologists, Social Workers, pediatric specialists i.e. orthopedists, hearing, vision, etc.

Educate families on the importance of primary prevention health care i.e. (EPSDT, immunization, dental care, prenatal care, poison control awareness) and promote lead poisoning awareness and prevention for children

Action Steps

- 1) Parental involvement.
- 2) Health Department Programs for community.
- 3) Market programs with industries who manufacture lead products or bi-products.
- 4) Increase awareness with local health care providers.

Economic Security

Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

Educate youth on the importance of a high school diploma/GED and employability/work maturity skills

Action Steps

- 1) Selma Career link, About Face Academy, Workshops, Education First Rally, etc. to educate kids through seminars, workshops and public meetings.
- 2) Grow the Fatherhood Initiative in Dallas County.

Transportation

Action Steps

- 1) Talk to community leaders about the need for a public transportation system in Selma and how it could benefit the community.
- 2) Identify resources to finance system.

Identify/educate youth on resources available for them in the community

Action Steps

- 1) Identify available resources and put together a resource directory.

Education

Children learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

Increase community awareness of student learning in reading, math, science and social studies and increase community involvement in preparing students and parents for state tests: Alabama Reading and Math Tests; SAT-grades 3-8; Alabama High School Graduation Exam-grades 9-12

Action Steps

- 1) Keep the community abreast of current trends through PSA announcements, newspaper articles, and committee reports at Children's Policy Council, school's parent newsletters, PTO meetings, celebratory events and informational events.

Increase community awareness of the need for students to attend school each day and be on time; increase parental and community support that advances student learning, school safety and school discipline

Action Steps

- 1) School's parent newsletters, PTO meetings, PSA announcements.

Increase community awareness for need to eliminate extremely high rate of diseases associated with being overweight in Dallas County. Special emphasis will be given to students and parents

Action Steps

1) Keep the community abreast of current trends through school's parent newsletters, PTO meetings, newspaper articles, PSA announcements, celebratory events and informational events.

Health

Children's (0 - 19) physical and mental well-being in the county.

Lack of access to health care and health insurance

Action Steps

- 1) Collaborate with existing local transportation services (i.e. KID ONE, Medicaid and West Alabama Transportation).
- 2) Educate the community on how to access information regarding transportation services.
- 3) Assist families in obtaining health insurance -BCBS, ALLKIDS, Medicaid, etc.
- 4) Target the following health care issues: obesity, lead poisoning, and teenage pregnancy.

Lack of Pediatric sub-specialists

Action Steps

- 1) Collaborate with pediatric physicians and discuss the needs of our children.
- 2) Encourage students to enter the health care field.
- 3) Provide students with information relating to grants to further their education.

Education

Action Steps

- 1) Community collaboration.
- 2) Educate the public to bring awareness on health and education (Wellness Program, WIC and Nutrition Program).
- 3) Form partnership with local health care providers.

Parent Involvement Skills

Parents and guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

Increase parental involvement in schools

Action Steps

- 1) Provide community awareness programs.
- 2) Obtain funding for parent projects that work with at-risk families of school children.
- 3) Provide parenting classes through our schools and community based programs.
- 4) Encourage parent participation in PTO/PTA organizations.

Provide mentoring programs to help families in need of assistance

Action Steps

- 1) Educate parents about how to watch for symptoms of abuse (i.e. physical, sexual, emotional, and verbal).
- 2) Organize task force of community service agencies to develop a county-wide parenting program.
- 3) Coordinate efforts between local school systems and businesses to support a partnership with the Selma City and Dallas County schools.

Teach appropriate parenting skills

Action Steps

- 1) Provide on-going parenting classes with referrals from the schools, court system, mental health, and other professional organizations.
- 2) Research and apply for grants for parenting classes that include funding to provide incentives for parents.
- 3) Encourage the sharing of information and collaboration between agencies and the schools.

Safety

Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

Reduce violent juvenile crime

Action Steps

- 1) Establish and operate a detention facility.
- 2) Establish conflict resolution classes for juveniles who fight; Operate Teen Court and Juvenile Conference Committee to prevent violent crime.
- 3) Support programs like football camps, JPO mentoring program to help children stay out of trouble.
- 4) Firmer punishment for repeat offenders.

Reduce access to weapons

Action Steps

- 1) Work with Selma Police Department and Sheriff's Dept. to educate children on danger of weapons.
- 2) Increase awareness of bad consequences of guns and violent crime through public service announcements.

Need for homeless shelter, transition home for those being released from jail/prison and long term residential drug treatment

Action Steps

- 1) Working on establishing a homeless shelter/transitional home.
- 2) Recruiting Teen Challenge for a residential treatment facility.

Policy Recommendations

No Policy Recommendation submitted